



# THREE GENERATIONS

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## EXCELLENCE

Tom Donaldson, Programme Manager in the University Strategic Programme Office won in the “Delivering Results” category at the Vice-Chancellor’s Excellence Awards. His award was for providing professional services that have resulted in significant growth of the University’s revenue sources and securing an on-going and valuable research platform for the wider University.

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## NEW WRITERS’ ACADEMY

The Academy of New Zealand Literature was launched in May with seed money from the Vice Chancellor’s Strategic Development Fund. It is based on successful international models like the Royal Society of Literature in the UK and the German Academy for Language and Literature and also has strong connections with the Royal Society of Literature, the Booker Foundation and the Commonwealth Foundation in London.

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## SIX HUNDRED YEARS

It seems contradictory for a world hurtling headlong into an increasingly grim future, driven by economic and political imperatives and ideologies indifferent, at worst inimical, to preservations of any kind. Yet Shakespeare’s prestige has, it seems, never been higher, or more widely invested in - his floating head with its balding pate is probably better known globally than that of any other artist of the past. Why?

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## INGENIO OUT NOW

The Autumn issue of *Ingenio*, the University's alumni magazine with a circulation now up to 120,000, is out. The cover story features Karen Willcox, Professor of Aeronautics and Astronautics at MIT, currently a visiting professor at Auckland and one of the University's 2016 Distinguished Alumni. The "Taking issue" feature addresses the global refugee crisis, and among research stories is one on the software programme "R".



## WINNING MUSICIAN

Flute-player Anna Cooper won the 2016 University of Auckland Graduation Gala Concerto Competition. The 22-year-old was awarded the grand prize worth \$6,000 as well as the development prize worth a further \$2,000. A Bachelor of Music (Honours) student, Anna is studying flute with Luca Manghi at the School of Music and wowed the audience and judges with her rendition of Reinecke Flute Concerto in D major.



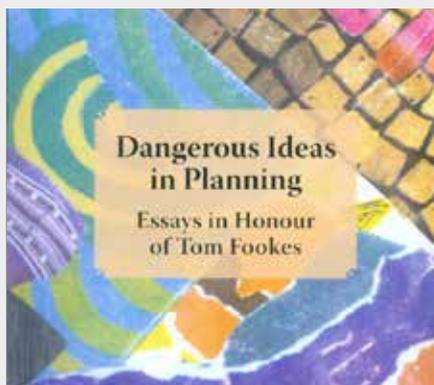
## LAW STUDENT IN INTERNATIONAL ADVISORY ROLE

Rez Gardi, an honours student in the Faculty of Law, will represent New Zealand at the Global Refugee Youth Consultations and annual UNHCR-NGO consultations in Geneva next month. This will be one of her duties as a youth adviser recruited by the New Zealand Red Cross. In this role she will also assist New Zealand Red Cross in planning the co-chairing of the Annual Tripartite Consultations on Resettlement in 2017. Rez is pictured with former NZ Prime Minister Helen Clark.



## DANGEROUS IDEAS

A planner who was instrumental in the creation of New Zealand's Resource Management Act 1991, will be celebrated this month with the launch of a new book. *Dangerous Ideas in Planning: Essays in Honour of Tom Fookes*, reflects on the late planner's life, research and legacy. Edited by Prue Taylor, School of Architecture and Planning and Jan Crawford, planner and Independent Hearings Panel member to the proposed Auckland Unitary Plan, the book contains contributions from 13 leaders in the field of planning.



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COVER PHOTO: Three generations of the Sorrenson family at Autumn Graduation. From left: Emeritus Professor of History, Keith Sorrenson, his son Richard Sorrenson, Manager of the University of Auckland Foundation, and Richard's son Peter Sorrenson. Photo by Sampford Cathie.

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## VICE-CHANCELLOR'S EXCELLENCE AWARDS



**Penny Collins, Team Leader Online Communications with Student Information and Marketing Services** was one of seven winners at this year's Vice-Chancellor's Excellence Awards held on 5 May. Penny won in the category of "Leadership" for establishing a successful student portal "MyAucklandUni" to help students during the critical stages of enrolment.

The awards recognise and reward excellence in a wide variety of activities that contribute to the University's teaching, research and community service endeavours. A review of took place in 2015 and this was the first time the event was held in the Alumni Marquee and new awards were presented.

Other winners were:

**The MAPAS Team from the Faculty of Medical and Health Sciences**, comprising William Nepia, Susanadaisy Jensen, Marcia Leenen-Young and Ruby Timmo, won in the

category of "Customer/stakeholder experience" for delivering a flagship admissions and support equity programme for the Faculty of Medical and Health Sciences, targeting Maori and Pacific Students.

**Dr Lynette Read, Research Development Manager** with the Faculty of Arts, won in the category of "Enabling people" for providing a robust research support environment for the Faculty of Arts academic staff, specifically in regard to funding applications and award nominations.

**Ian Sayer, Application Specialist from the Faculty of Medical and Health Sciences**, won in the "Community engagement" category for his work developing a web-based calculator for the 2015 ACR/EULAR Gout Classification Criteria, which will define disease in all new gout research.

**Tom Donaldson, Programme Manager in the University Strategic Programme Office** won in the "Delivering results" category for providing professional services that have resulted

in significant growth of the University's revenue sources and securing an on-going and valuable research platform for the wider University.

Two Vice-Chancellor's Excellence Awards which professional staff may also be nominated for along with academic staff and students are in the categories of health, safety and wellbeing, and environmental sustainability. They are:

**HazTRAC Subject Matter Experts** from the faculties of Science and Medical and Health Sciences ( see below but not in order) Ray Gilbert, Tim Layt, Peter Mayne, Keith Richards, Mary Spellman and Vicky Tsang) won in the "Health, safety and wellbeing" category for their work on the implementation and standardisation of SciQuest ERM University-wide, which substantially reduced the risk from both chemicals and biologicals to staff and students.

**Andrew Stoakes and Jez Vere-Critchler** won in the "Environmental sustainability" category for improving the efficiency and overall capacity of the data centre at OGGB.



## SPECIAL AWARD, SPECIAL RESEARCHER

**Our pre-eminent brain researcher, Distinguished Professor Richard Faull, has been honoured by the Health Research Council of New Zealand (HRC) as part of its 25-year anniversary celebrations.**

At our Celebration for Research Excellence the HRC Chief Executive Professor Kath McPherson and HRC Board Chair Dr Lester Levy presented the internationally renowned brain researcher with a special award. Eye specialist Dr Ilva Rupenthal also received a special emerging researcher award.

Richard, Director of the Centre for Brain Research at the University and Co-Director of the Brain Research New Zealand Centre for Research Excellence, has a long association with the HRC. Since being awarded his first HRC project grant 25 years ago, he has gone on to lead a further three more HRC-funded projects and four HRC- funded programmes in the area of

neurodegeneration in the human brain.

He is currently part of the team working on a \$5 million HRC-funded programme led by Professor Michael Dragunow, which aims to translate lab-based research into therapies for patients suffering from neurodegenerative diseases such as Alzheimer's, Parkinson's and Huntington's disease.

Professor Kath McPherson says Richard's award recognises his outstanding research career, during which he has made a major contribution to the international fight against devastating neurological disorders. "Professor Faull's passion has enabled him to champion brain research, attracting other researchers to build a world-class brain research team right here in New Zealand. In the process, he has also managed to mentor and supervise 26 masters and honours students – all with first class honours – and 45 PhD students to completion."



Richard Faull and Dr Lester Levy

## SUPREME WINNER



The University's Civil Structures Hall (Newmarket Building 906), home to one of Australasia's largest earthquake testing facilities, was named Supreme Award winner at the New Zealand Commercial Project Awards (NZCPA) in May. The NZCPA recognises top commercial buildings

and the architects, engineers, developers and contractors behind them.

The purpose-built structures hall, which includes 200m<sup>2</sup> of strong floor area and 9m high strong walls to allow testing of full-scale civil engineering projects, took out the top prize against 61 of the country's premium commercial properties vying for awards. As well as the Supreme Award, Building 906 also took out the "Education" category award, a Gold Award and the value award for top property over \$15 million.

Created by the team of Scarbro Construction, Jasmax Architects, engineers BGT, and external project managers RCP, Building 906 impressed judges with its "deceptively simple" concrete structure with a unitised glazed façade which at once provides a visual transparency to the campus activities and engages with the surroundings.

More information is available at Supreme Award 2016.

## NEW WRITERS' ACADEMY

Eminent writers **Patricia Grace, Eleanor Catton and Witi Ihimaera** are a few of the big literary names associated with an ambitious initiative launched by Convenor of our Masters of Creative Writing programme, **Dr Paula Morris**.

The Academy of New Zealand Literature, (ANZL) aims at promoting, supporting and sustaining a community of New Zealand's best writers. Its public face is a website which offers in-depth literary features, conversations between notable writers from New Zealand and overseas and profiles of the academy's fellows, as well as the latest literary news, cartoons, excerpts and quotes.

Thoughts from New Zealand writers currently based overseas will also be part of the mix in a letters section. Imagined as a constantly growing magazine, the site will offer a valuable resource for everyone from teachers, students and researchers to agents, publishers, editors, booksellers and literary festival directors, both in New Zealand and overseas.

"Teachers, for example, have very few secondary resources; this site will let them know who's writing, who's well regarded and who's doing what," says Paula.

Meanwhile, the academy's 'backroom' will function as a support network for mid-career and established writers, identifying a range of opportunities to promote and support their careers via scholarships, residencies and

festivals.

The academy will also be working on creating e-samplers to promote New Zealand writers to international publishers and festival directors.

The academy was launched with seed money from the Vice Chancellor's Strategic Development Fund. It is based on successful international models like the Royal Society of Literature in the UK and the German Academy for Language and Literature and also has strong connections with the Royal Society of Literature, the Booker Foundation and the Commonwealth Foundation in London.

The site's Māori name is Te Whare Mātātuhi o Aotearoa. See [www.anzliterature.com](http://www.anzliterature.com)



Dr Selina Tusitala Marsh and Dr Paula Morris

## NEW STAFF MEMBER

Ainslie Moore has joined the University as the new Deputy Director International Operations. Ainslie took up her role with the International Office at the beginning of April. In this capacity, she will lead the international programmes and partnerships team as well as working closely with International Office management across the range of its mission.

Ainslie brings 15 years of higher education experience in organisations such as IDP Education Australia, The Australian National University (ANU), the Australian Vice-Chancellors' Committee, and has served as Policy Director International at Universities Australia since 2008. In this role she led the largest team within the organisation and worked closely with a wide range of international education policies, including Work Integrated Learning. During this period, she completed a secondment with Austrade in Washington, DC, leading their North American Education desk.

Ainslie holds a bachelor of Communication and a Master of Public Policy degree from ANU.

## NEW SCHOLARSHIPS

Hundreds of new undergraduate scholarships will be provided by the University to help entry-level students with their transition into university life.

The University of Auckland has opened applications for four brand new types of scholarship which will be awarded to more than 400 students starting undergraduate studies in 2017 including;

University of Auckland Top Achiever Scholarships – value \$20,000

University of Auckland Māori Academic Excellence Scholarships – value \$20,000

University of Auckland Pacific Academic Excellence Scholarships – value \$20,000

University of Auckland Academic Potential Scholarships – value up to \$20,000

The University of Auckland will have many more scholarships available for students to apply for than any other New Zealand university.

"Our focus in designing the new schemes and increasing the number of scholarships available has been on empowering students from schools across New Zealand to successfully transition into their first year at the University," says Vice-Chancellor Professor Stuart McCutcheon.

## OUR GRADUATION COVERAGE

More than 6500 University of Auckland students graduated at this year's Autumn Graduation. Of these, 5150 chose to graduate in person and a further 1550 graduated in absentia. The 6700 graduands received a total of 6838 qualifications. This year, the oldest graduand was 84 and the youngest aged 18. There were 772 Māori and Pasifika graduands.

Most of the faculties recorded increases in the number of qualifications awarded, with Science leading the field with 1426 followed by Business and Economics (1264), Arts (1192), Education and Social Work (889), Medical and Health Sciences (850), Engineering (638), Creative Arts and Industries (369) and Law (210).

Here *Uninews* records highlights and special moments from Autumn Graduation.

### ALL IN THE FAMILY

When Peter Sorrenson was capped with a BSc in maths and physics at Autumn Graduation, he became the third generation of his family to graduate from the University of Auckland.

Peter's grandfather, Emeritus Professor of History Keith Sorrenson, graduated with an MA in 1956 and went to Oxford to complete his DPhil and then returned to the department from 1964 until his retirement in 1995. Peter's grandmother Judith Sorrenson is also an alumna. She graduated with an MA in 1981 and Dip ELT in 1992 and also worked at the Student Learning Centre teaching academic writing skills.

Peter's father, Dr Richard Sorrenson (PhD Princeton), who is now the manager of the University of Auckland Foundation, graduated with an MSc in 1984.

But the story doesn't stop there. Peter's mother Professor Helen Sword, who likewise has a PhD from Princeton (where she and Richard met), is also on staff and is director of CLear (Centre for Learning and Research in Higher Education) and Peter's younger brother, David, is currently enrolled in an Auckland BCom/BA.



From left: Judith Sorrenson, Richard Sorrenson, Helen Sword, Peter Sorrenson, Keith Sorrenson and David Sorrenson

As Richard notes, the family has had an almost continuous involvement, one way or another, with the University since 1950 when Keith was the first in his family to attend a university. "And it has offered many opportunities for learning

and development for which the family is very grateful."

Peter is currently working in the Photon Lab at the University and plans on studying physics at post-graduate level in Germany later this year.

### DEAN'S DAUGHTER GRADUATES

Rhian Aitken, daughter of Professor Graeme Aitken, Dean of the Faculty of Education and Social Work graduated with a Bachelor of Education in Early Childhood Teaching and her proud father was on stage at the Aotea Centre handing her the degree.

Rhian, now the mother of four young children, left school at 15 to work in various secretarial jobs and had no interest in further study.

"Had anyone asked me if I would go to university in those younger years I would have said 'no way'," she admits.

However it was watching her father graduate with a Doctorate in Education in 2006 that started her imagining what it would be like to wear a cap and gown herself one day.

"I hadn't realised what a powerful thing it was to gain a degree and how much I wanted this for

myself and for my children."

Being a role model for her children was a key factor in her decision to go back to schoolstudy.

"It was very important to me for my four young Samoan/NZ European children to see that with hard work and persistence, you can achieve anything you put your mind to and that it's never too late to chase your dreams."

While getting no special treatment or even acknowledgment as the Dean's daughter, she did get a lot of support from her tutors as a solo mother of four juggling study, work and parenting.

I'm so proud of myself for achieving this degree and to be doing this with my parents, - mother Sandra Aitken is the principal of Pt Chevalier Primary - my children, my niece and my sister alongside me."



Professor Graeme Aitken, Sandra Aitken and their daughter Rhian Aitken with Rhian's children Chanel, 12, Mikayla, 10, Lucia, 7, and four-year-old Niko.

# GRADUATION



## GRADUATION COVERAGE

### MOTHERS AND DAUGHTERS

#### **Maria Rodrigues**

Being supportive of each other but also competitive has been a big help to twins Samantha (left) and Sophia Rodrigues, daughters of Maria Rodrigues, who is Group Services Administrator in the Faculty of Science.

Both 26-year-olds graduated with a Doctorate in Chemical and Materials Engineering.

While the twins are not strictly identical, Samantha acknowledges they can be hard to tell apart – although Maria always knows which is which.

“They have often tried to fool me but I always know,” she says.

Maria says hard work and a supportive family environment have been the key to the twins achieving their goals.

“They have done really well, we are very proud

of them.”

Samantha’s studies are in Biomechanics and she is currently working for the Defence Technology Agency which provides research, science and technology support to the New Zealand Defence Force and the Ministry of Defence.

Sophia’s research is in the area of oral food processing and she is currently doing post-doctoral work at the University of Queensland.

#### **Suzi Phillips**

Our Faculty of Medical and Health Sciences media adviser, Suzi Phillips from the Communications team, was on campus to see her younger daughter Zoe graduate with a Bachelor of Laws conjoint with a Bachelor of Arts (Anthropology).

Zoe’s graduation continues a strong family association with the University. Suzi gained her degree at this University, met her husband Peter

here and married on campus at the Maclaurin Chapel. She has both a Bachelor of Arts (Political Studies) and a Graduate Diploma in Environmental Management from the University.

Her elder daughter, Jessica graduated with a conjoint degree in Law and Politics in 2010 and works as a litigator in London. Zoe is now finishing an internship with the Auckland City Law Centre in Anzac Ave.

Suzi’s mother Mary, worked in the Faculty of Medical and Health Sciences in the early 1980s and her stepfather, Professor John Carman was the founding Professor of Anatomy at the Medical School in 1968. He retired in 1988, and continued his association with the Faculty as an Emeritus Professor, co-authoring a major multi-volume translation of work on the human body by Belgium anatomist Andreas Vesalius from 1543.

Suzi has worked with the Communications Department since January 2013.



## GRANDMOTHER AND GRANDDAUGHTER

### Jacqui and Cath Tizard

When Jacqui Tizard graduated with a BSc, her grandmother Dame Catherine Tizard was in the audience watching,

Long before she became Mayor of Auckland, and later Governor-General, Dame Catherine enrolled at the then Auckland University College to study for a bachelor of arts degree, majoring in zoology.

But her career in the sciences took a hiatus when she married future Deputy Prime Minister Bob Tizard and raised four children.

She was eventually able to return to zoology studies at the University, first in a part-time position and later as a faculty member, overseeing a laboratory and 52 students and finally graduating with her degree.

While her children opted against careers in the sciences, her curiosity about the natural world did rub off on her granddaughter.

“She has been a pretty big influence and has always been interested in what’s out there,”



Jacqui says.

There were holidays in Coromandel, where Jacqui learned how to dive and where her grandmother taught her how to shuck oysters.

“I was tickled pink when she decided to major in biology - I thought that was great,” Dame Catherine says.

Jacqui’s studies are based around genetic

approaches which, using DNA sequencing, are increasingly revealing new information about New Zealand’s abundance of endemic species.

The masters degree she’s now part-way through focuses on the Chatham Island taiko, one of the rarest seabirds in the world, with a population estimated at fewer than 150.



## OLDEST GRADUATE

**“I don’t want to spend my time going on senior citizen bus trips,” says 84-year-old Nancy Keat, this year’s oldest University of Auckland graduate.**

A Freeman’s Bay resident, Nancy graduated with a postgraduate diploma in art history, having completed a Bachelor of Arts in art history, with a minor in European studies. And she hasn’t finished yet. She has enrolled for a one-year masters degree focusing on public art in Auckland, a groundbreaking area where very little research has been done.

After her three children grew up, Nancy started taking courses in art history at the University’s Centre for Continuing Education.

In 2003 when she was 71, a tutor suggested she enrol in a degree course and she still remembers her first exam “with huge satisfaction”.

“It felt like a marathon but I was hooked. I discovered I liked doing the research. It was like a treasure hunt.”

Nancy’s masters thesis will focus on the role of public art in Auckland and its relationship to the city’s ethnic diversity.

## FATHER AND DAUGHTERS

Professor John Windsor from the Department of Surgery had two good reasons to feel pleased and proud as his two daughters graduated, Michelle (left) with a Bachelor of Engineering and Rachael with an MbChb.

Rachael, now a junior doctor at Whangarei Hospital, says her father was the most significant of a number of wonderful mentors she had during her studies: “[He is] a surgeon with a deep heart, a passion for the underdog, and a real sense of service.”

Of John and his wife Christine’s five children, four have now graduated from the University of Auckland. Matthew, who received an LLB from Auckland followed by a masters from Columbia and a PhD from Cambridge, is now doing postdoctoral research at Oxford. Joshua, who completed his BA (Hons) at Auckland is now studying for a masters in philosophy at Kingston



University in London. Benjamin qualified in Outdoor Recreation Leadership and secondary school teaching at Auckland University of Technology.

All the children were home-schooled through their primary years by their mother, who had trained as a primary teacher. “It was such fun,” says Christine, “a fantastic experience. They were all keen learners, but all very different.”



## DANCING BY DEGREES

The three Cesan brothers (from left, Andrew, Josh and Richie) graduated together with Bachelor of Dance Studies degrees from the University at Autumn Graduation. The brothers perform in iDentity Dance Company (iD Co), and won silver in the mega crew division at the World Hip Hop Dance Championships in Las Vegas in 2014.

# WHAT’S ON CAMPUS

## SOCIETY SALON

5 July, 5-7pm

Old Government House

Free to attend

What are researchers at the University doing today that will help the world of tomorrow? The University of Auckland Society invites you to their first salon event of the year where we’ll hear about the incredible research in the areas of vision science, education and neuroscience from our panel: Professor Steven Dakin, Associate Professor Anne Hynds and Associate Professor Cathy Stinear. They’ll discuss the challenges, opportunities and see priorities in their fields. See [www.society.auckland.ac.nz](http://www.society.auckland.ac.nz) for more information and to register. Registrations close 29 June.

## CHANGING OUR BRAINS

21 June, 5.30-6.30pm

Epsom Campus, Gate 3, 74 Epsom Ave

Dr Michael Yellow Bird from North Dakota State University in the US will give a public lecture in which he uses neuroscience research to examine how mindfulness approaches and traditional indigenous contemplative practices can train the mind and positively change the structure and function of the brain. He will discuss how experiences and perceptions change our brain (neuroplasticity); shape our DNA and affect the expression of our genes; activate different brain regions, change our brain waves, and shape specialised brain cells.

## TERTIARY DANCE FESTIVAL

27 June-2 July

Location: Auckland Central

Host: Dance Studies

Dance students from across Aotearoa will assemble for four days of workshops, classes, seminars and performances. The Tertiary Dance Festival 2016 is a rare opportunity to learn from leading New Zealand and international dance practitioners. Connect with dancers, teachers and industry leaders from across New Zealand and ignite the future of dance in Aotearoa. Following the festival will be the Undisciplining Dance Symposium, hosted by Choreographic Research Aotearoa, Dance Studies, the University of Auckland.



## RESEARCH ON DISPLAY

One of many highlights at the Research Excellence Awards held on 4 May was 12 exhibitions of research work on display in the marquee, all centered around the theme “Understanding consumers: Focusing on health and high value nutrition foods and beverages”.

Before or after the announcement of five Best Doctoral Theses, six Early Career Research Excellence awards, four University Research Excellence Awards, Commercialisation medals and special HRC medals, there was an

opportunity to walk around each exhibit and talk to researchers. Our photographer caught Associate Professor Jennifer Weller (above left) and Kaylene Henderson from the School of Medicine displaying MORSim, the University’s multidisciplinary operating Room Simulation which aims to improve communication and teamwork in the operating room (OR). MORSim is being implemented nationally, with funding by ACC and collaborative support from the Health Quality and Safety Commission.

Another display featured the work of

bioengineers Associate Professor Leo Cheng, Associate Professor Gregory O’Grady, Dr Peng Du, Dr Niranchan Paskaranandavivel, Dr Tim Angeli and Dr Shameer Sathar, who also won a Research Excellence award for their work on “feeling the gut”.

Just like the heart, the stomach and intestine also generate rhythmic bioelectrical acidity as food is digested in the gut. In patients with significant digestive health issues, the bioelectrical activity of the gut can be affected; however there is not a reliable clinical tool for detecting abnormal bioelectrical activities associated with digestive diseases. MedTec, which is supported by the MedTech core and in collaboration with AUT, is currently developing a “torso tank” – a bench-top test platform for relating the bioelectrical activation of the stomach to the body surface.

The three other winners of research excellence awards were: Professor Peter Watts of the Faculty of Law, Professor Gillian Brock from the School of Humanities in the Faculty of Arts and Associate Professor Quentin Atkinson and Professor Russell Gray from the School of Psychology in the Faculty of Science. Peter is arguably the leading international expert in agency law. Gillian’s research crosses such apparently disparate fields as philosophy, law, taxation, international relations, health and social policy. She has been described as “one of the most important scholars working on global justice today”. The work of Quentin and Russell is described as “iconic” and “disruptive” because it uses statistical tools that were developed for the purposes of evolutionary biology in entirely new ways, to explore the evolution of human society and culture. See more coverage on the awards on the Staff Intranet



Peng Du, Tim Angeli and Nira Paskaranandavivel with “feeling the gut”



### POI FOR YOUR HEALTH

**The first research study to measure the effects of International Poi on physical and cognitive function in healthy older adults is underway.**

A pākehā from America studying poi? I am often met with confusion, curiosity, and sometimes skepticism when explaining my research on poi and health. It can all be dispelled quite simply, if you consider one small fact ... the whole world practices poi. It may take on many shapes and sizes, but people around the globe enjoy spinning a weight on the end of a cord in circular patterns around their bodies, and they all refer to the art by its Māori name, "poi." I have been practicing and teaching International Poi (an overarching term which refers to poi practiced outside of Māoridom) for over a decade. During this time, I have witnessed the positive impact of poi on many people's lives (including my own), be it physically, mentally, emotionally, and everything in between. But I have always wanted ... more. Why, exactly, does it feel so good to spin a weight on a cord in a circle? How, exactly, might it affect the brain and the body? And so, naturally, I moved to the other

side of the world to measure the effects of poi on physical and cognitive function in a clinical trial. I wanted to discover how science and culture might meet, and what they might say to each other about a weight orbiting on the end of a string.

Working between the Centre for Brain Research and Dance Studies, the first round of an assessor-blind randomised control trial has just concluded. Forty healthy adults over 60 years old participated in a month of International Poi lessons (treatment group) or Tai Chi lessons (control group), and underwent a series of pre- and post-tests measuring things like balance, upper limb range of motion, bimanual coordination, grip strength, and cognitive flexibility. Feedback from the participants after their International Poi lessons has been exciting: "Positive on flexibility, stress release, coordination and concentration. Totally, totally positive. Mental and physical." "I am able to use my left wrist more freely, and I am focusing better. Learning to age in a positive way. A great exercise and I hope to continue with this."

We are currently facing unprecedented population ageing worldwide, and simple, effective strategies to maintain cognitive and physical function in old age are urgently needed. There is evidence indicating that moderate exercise, in particular Tai Chi, has beneficial effects on balance, fear of falling, blood pressure, and cognitive performance in older adults. International Poi shares many characteristics with Tai Chi, and also has some unique features that may specifically benefit motor control and cognitive function. This pilot study is the first in the world to evaluate these potential benefits, with a view toward designing a larger randomised controlled trial for adults affected by stroke and mild cognitive impairment. This research may also have specific implications in Māoridom, as many physical and mental health programs have been aimed at Māori populations, but there are few approaches offered in a whānau context that utilise activities found within Māori culture.

Conducting the first research in a field can often leave one confused, curious, and sometimes skeptical, but I believe working at the intersection of science and culture to study a weight orbiting on the end of a cord is the perfect place for a pākehā from America to be. This study is an important stepping stone toward future International Poi research, and I hope it will have ever growing implications for improving health and prolonging quality of life worldwide.

If you'd like to learn more about my research, or are interested in participating in the next round of the study, visit [www.spinpoi.com](http://www.spinpoi.com) or email [krie192@aucklanduni.ac.nz](mailto:krie192@aucklanduni.ac.nz).

UNINEWS highlights some of the University research milestones that have hit the headlines in the past couple of months.

### FISHING

A study that exposed six decades of widespread under reporting and dumping of marine fish has been covered extensively in the media. Lead researcher Dr Glenn Simmons from the New Zealand Asia Institute at the Business School appeared on *Nine To Noon*, *Paul Henry*, *Radio Live*, *NewsHub* and *One News*, and was quoted in print and online. The research, part of a decade-long, international project to assess the total global marine catch, put the true New Zealand catch at 2.7 times official figures.

### GRADUATION

#### AGING GRACEFULLY

The story of 84-year-old Nancy Keat, oldest graduate in this Autumn's Graduation has had a dream run with a piece coming up on TV3 news, stories in the *NZ Herald online*, *the Auckland City Harbour News*, *the East & Bays Courier*, *the Northern Advocate* and the *Wairarapa Times*.

#### DANCERS

The Cesan brothers Richard, Andrew and Josh, graduated together, all with Bachelor of Dance Studies. The story and photographs featured in *Sunday Star-Times*, *Sunday News*, *Central Leader* and *East & Bays Courier*.

### WATER

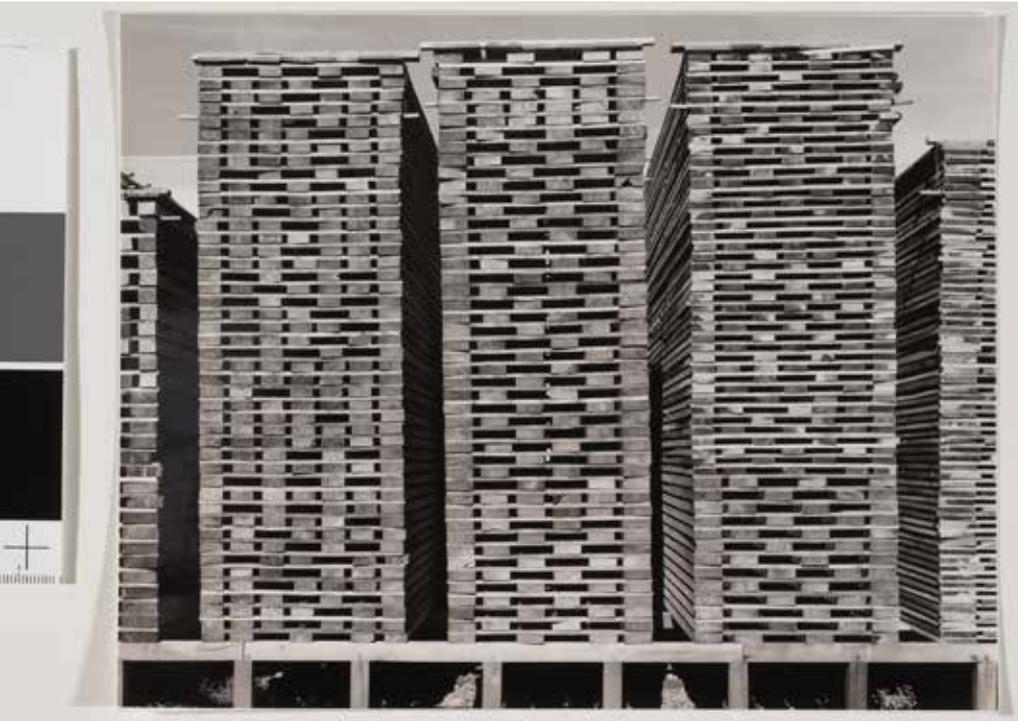
Professor Mohammed Mehdi Farid, from the Faculty of Engineering's Chemical & Materials department discusses his life in Iraq during the 1990 Gulf War and the lengths he had to go to in order to get clean drinking water for his family. His story was part of a feature in the *Dominion Post* on the possible effects of a major earthquake on Wellington's infrastructure: "Post-quake preparedness- the lowdown on emergency water".

### CORNEAL RESEARCH

A video on Professor Trevor Sherwin's innovative corneal research (hosted now on the UOA YouTube page at <https://youtu.be/EDn-COxytjI>), has had more than 820 views on the Facebook page of Optometry Australia. A clip from the video also features on the webpage of Optometry UK.

# FROM THE COLLECTION

## ART COLLECTION



H.G. Johns (1924-1999), *Air Drying – native timber in the Hutt Valley, c.1960. gelatin silver*

Visiting New Zealand on board the Endeavour in 1769, the English botanist Joseph Banks joined Captain James Cook in exclaiming over the potential they saw in “the immense woods, lofty trees and the finest timber” of native forests. Today, less than a quarter of

our country’s area remains forested with those species that Banks painstakingly depicted in his *Florilegium* and gloried in as “new to science”.

By 1900, fires and felling had halved that verdant cover for settlement. Kauri, kahikatea,

rimu and totara were logged for their utility in construction, while rata and manuka fuelled the cooking and heating in every cottage and whare. Historian Guy Scholefield described this timber milling as “a pitiful war...an executioner’s warrant to pick out the eyes of the forest, to stay and ruin the rest and then go elsewhere....”

Fortunately the Forests Act, passed in 1949, established the New Zealand Forest Service and Alex Entrican became its Director General. Recognising that a new era had dawned, Entrican employed Englishman (and conservationist) John Johns to document forests and forestry (including the Waipoua Kauri Forest which Entrican was instrumental in making a sanctuary in 1952). Johns held the photographer’s role for thirty years, from 1954 until his retirement in 1984.

Devonshire-born, Johns had trained as an aerial photographer with the Royal Air Force during WWII, studying forestry for four years in England and Wales once he was demobbed. Before emigrating to New Zealand in 1951, he attended a summer workshop at Yosemite National Park with the American photographer and environmentalist Ansel Adams. There Johns learned the aesthetic of formalism where technical elements govern how the image is created, without emotional freight of the image or contextualisation to help identification.

Although he described himself as a

## WHAT’S COMING OUT

### SHELF LIFE

Every year for the last three years Emeritus Professor C. K. Stead has written fiction and poetry; the rest of the day is reserved for reviews and essays, blogs and journals, lectures and opinion pieces. *Shelf Life: Reviews, Replies and Reminiscences*, published by Auckland University Press, collects the best of the afternoon work of recent years. From discussions of Mansfield and Eliot, to Curnow and Catton, through old skirmishes and new insights, the guiding voice here is vintage Stead: clear, incisive, eloquent and personal. He has now published more than 40 books. He was made a member of the Order of New Zealand in 2007 and received the Prime Minister’s Award for fiction in 2009.

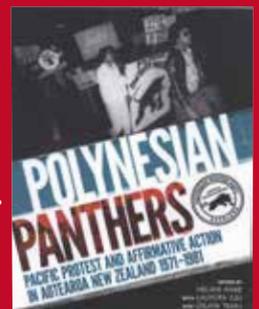


### POLYNESIAN PANTHERS

This book, subtitled *Pacific Protest and Affirmative Action in Aotearoa New Zealand 1971-1981*, provides the first record of the Pacific rights and social activist movement in New Zealand, told by those who were there. It covers an era from the foundation of the Polynesian Panther Party (PPP) in 1971 - inspired by the American social consciousness and advocacy group, the Black Panthers - to their last public act; a Springbok tour protest in 1981.

Their actions were a desperate but necessary revolt against the entrenched stigma of racism and discrimination that Pacific Islanders faced trying to integrate into a New Zealand way of life during the 1970s and early 1980s. Collecting together interviews, memoirs, poetry and newspaper articles as well as critical analysis, *Polynesian Panthers* is an edgy, hard-hitting account of an important period in New Zealand’s social and cultural evolution.

The book, a new edition published by Huia Press, was edited by Dr Melani Anae, senior lecturer in Pacific Studies at the University of Auckland, with Lautofa Iuli and Leilani Tamu.



### SILENCING SCIENCE

“I believe that there are rifts between our scientists, our politicians and the public that put members of our society at risk,” says Professor Shaun Hendy in his BWB text, in the series of “short books on big subjects from great New Zealand writers”.

The nuclear meltdown at Fukushima, the Fonterra botulism scare, the Canterbury earthquakes: all these recent crises have put scientists in the spotlight.

documentary photographer, Johns goes beyond making merely a visual record in his depiction of this milled rimu stacked to air dry for a year. In his care for symmetry and composition, he creates a memorable image which is both abstract and heroic. Anchoring his composition with a triptych of the tallest columns at centre, Johns has framed his view to crop the flanking shorter stacks, inferring a continuous line of these perfect piles. Photographed from below so that they seem to loom, the timber stacks appear like modernist skyscrapers in a cityscape.

This is both a straight photograph, honouring the skills of the timber workers in achieving a perfectly level base of bearers, and a tricky one, rendering the familiar and everyday as unfamiliar and extraordinary. It is also a record of a bygone era, as only sustainable logging of native trees has been permitted in New Zealand since 2002, and consequently visions of vast stacks of air drying rimu such as these are now consigned to the past.

The exhibition *Celebrating Wood: Back to the Future*, with wooden furniture and carvings from the University collections and a display by Gretel Boswijk of the Tree Laboratory in the School of Biological Sciences, is on show at the Gus Fisher Gallery as part of the Auckland Festival of Photography until 2 July 2016.

What is the first duty of scientists in a crisis - to the government that funds them, to the employer who pays them, or to the wider public, desperate for information? And what if these obligations clash? Shaun

Hendy, professor of Physics and director of the Centre of Research Excellence Te Punaha Matatina, finds that in New Zealand the responsibilities of our scientists are often far from clear, with alarming consequences for us all.



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## MISCELLANEOUS

**DO YOU ENJOY PHILOSOPHICAL CONVERSATIONS?** If so, you might like to come and spend some time with other people who enjoy discussions on interesting, important and sometimes controversial matters. The group meets about once every three weeks. The topic for each evening is set in advance. For more information or to arrange to come email wayne@britten.com

**CITY LEGAL SERVICES.** Rainey Collins Wright is a small law firm centrally located at L1 Princes Court, 2 Princes Street. We are near the University, with good parking. We can assist with property transactions, trusts, wills, administration of estates, enduring powers of attorney and relationship property matters. Please phone our senior solicitor Nichola Christie on 600 0256 to discuss your needs, or email: nchristie@rainey.co.nz Visit [www.rainey.co.nz](http://www.rainey.co.nz)

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**ACCOMMODATION WANTED:** Visiting scholar from the USA seeking family accommodations from September 2016 to June/July 2017. Priorities are access to good schools (our daughters are 15 and 9), public transportation and the University. We prefer a single location but are open to combining shorter term stays. Please contact Matt, [zook@uky.edu](mailto:zook@uky.edu)



# SHAKESPEARE LIVES

This year marks the 400th anniversary of William Shakespeare's death. In April more than 70,000 people in Auckland attended performances of Shakespeare's plays in the Pop-up Globe, the first exact dimensional replica ever to be constructed of the second Globe Theatre, built in London in the early 1600s.

Professor Tom Bishop, noted Shakespearean scholar and head of English, Drama and Writing Studies, conducted a seminar in the Pop-up Globe and was one of three people invited to write for *Ingenio* magazine on the continuing relevance of Shakespeare. His *Ingenio* contribution is reprinted below, along with "The last word" a segment from the invited contribution by acclaimed Shakespearean actress, Lisa Harrow. Lisa, who completed her first year of tertiary study at Auckland before going on to train at RADA, played the part of Prospero in the University's Summer Shakespeare production of *The Tempest*, held this year at the Pop-up Globe.

## Shakespeare's galloping fame

It seems contradictory for a world hurtling headlong into an increasingly grim future, driven by economic and political imperatives and ideologies indifferent, at worst inimical, to preservations of any kind. Yet Shakespeare's prestige has, it seems, never been higher, or more widely invested in - his floating head with its balding pate is probably better known globally than that of any other artist of the past. Why?

In part this galloping fame is merely contingent, of course. If the dominant world power of the age of colonial settlement had been Spain, as it nearly was, we would now be reading and recognising Calderon, or Ji

Junxiang if it had been China. Even within the catalogue of poets in English available for coronation, the choice of Shakespeare has an element of the factitious, being largely created in the late eighteenth century. We should not underestimate the extent to which Shakespeare's contemporary dominance is the product of extrinsic circumstances that have little to do with his actual work.

Yet there are also perhaps intrinsic reasons for Shakespeare's position, and in particular two: his language and his action. The first was troublesome from the beginning, but also energising and productive. Later commentators were divided between deploring and celebrating it, but the modern Anglophone world has embraced its intensity, its dynamism and its expressive pungency. It is the joy of actors and the vexation of poets in English everywhere.

But this does not explain the warmth with which Shakespeare has been embraced in non-Anglophone cultures, even in Germany (where "unser Shakespeare" - "our Shakespeare" - is a common term), or Russia and Japan, once historic rivals of the British imperium. Or the avidity that greeted the invitation to theatre groups to send local language productions of all 37 Shakespeare plays to the London Globe in 2012. Or the success of the Globe's current touring production of *Hamlet*, which has visited 196 countries and been seen by over 100,000 people. Even setting aside extrinsic factors, which are no doubt present, these responses suggest a compelling vigour in the action and design of Shakespeare's plays that carries audiences along with them - even those whose access to their language is blocked. This is not so much a matter of a "universal" subject matter - medieval Danish dynastic chaos is

hardly of general interest - but rather of the way an audience's experience of dramatic action is marshalled and directed, involved and complicated. Though Shakespeare has received boosts from various quarters by the history that swept him up, he was a superb craftsman of dramatic artefacts, and that mastery continues to win modern followers and fans around the world.

## The last word

Near the end of *The Tempest*, Prospero realises he is ready to renounce his previous all-consuming drive for revenge and embrace a different way of being human. His line, marking the turning point of the play, is: "The rarer action is in virtue than in vengeance." And, my God, if the world's leaders could just embrace that, how different the world would be. Now, in this time, we are taking revenge at all levels: against the poor, against those of different religions, against anyone different from ourselves. If the leaders of the world could instead embrace that phrase of Shakespeare's we wouldn't be at war, we'd be creating a healthier, peaceful world. Instead of tearing the world apart we'd be putting it together again.

I think it's interesting that in Shakespeare's last play and almost the last beat of the play, it's as if he were saying: "After all these things I've written and through all this time I've lived, the one thing I've learned is that forgiveness is greater than vengeance."

To read the three contributions in full, see [www.alumni.auckland.ac.nz/en/af-publications](http://www.alumni.auckland.ac.nz/en/af-publications)

Photo by Peter Meecham: Twelfth Night at the Pop-Up Globe